1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

856 bandages or a cradle-board, are employed to accentuate the effect. [854] There are no cradles; if it is required to put the baby down it is laid on a woman's hood on the ground, but this is not often done, and I do not think it lies on its back sufficiently to cause any occipital flattening.

846 The child receives only the most superficial cleansing for the first five days. Then it is thoroughly washed in fresh water. It may 854 then be taken outside the hut, but its mother is careful to keep it out of the sun. There is a tendency on the part of young mothers nowadays to shorten the period of seclusion in the hut, which they must share with the child, but the old women do not countenance [565] this breach of rule if they can help it. If the child is *tsunaun*, i.e. if its mother is a woman of rank, the period of seclusion must be extended to ten days.

LACTATION

853 In the absence of any animal whose milk can be utilized, the infant is entirely dependent upon its mother for this essential of its diet. In cases of the mother's inability to feed the infant or inability on the part of the infant to suckle, it usually dies. I did not hear of any cases in which the infant of a living woman was suckled by some one else, but instances are known to me where the sister of a woman who had died was feeding the dead woman's baby, having lost her own.

Babies are not passed round and suckled by different women at various times, as has been reported from other regions. While the child is small the mother keeps it with her constantly, taking it with her when she goes to the taro garden or to search for shell-fish on the reef. When it is a little older it may be left at home in charge of a small girl or another woman, but the mother will return to feed it. There is no attempt at regularity of feeding; it is generally offered the breast if it cries much. Some women have very pendulous breasts, but I have not seen any long enough to be thrown over the shoulder to a child carried on the back. I have often seen a woman bend down with her hands on her knees so that a child standing beside her could suck.

● 757 Women whose children die during the lactation period frequently suffer considerable pain from the retention of the milk. 824 In the cases which came under my personal observation, nothing was done to relieve this, but in my collection of 'prescriptions'

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

there are two intended for this purpose. One is for use when the breasts are painful because the child has died:

Karawinoa (*Acanthaceae*).

Scrape the skin of the root and chew it with the betel-mixture. Spit the mash on to your hand and press it against the woman's breasts. Then scrape the skin off a branch of the same shrub and bury it under the bed on which the woman sleeps.

The other is used to mitigate pain in the breasts at the time of weaning:

Bɔ̃ (a species of bracken, *Pteris*).

Rub the leaves between the hands, add lime, and massage the breasts.

There is no belief that suckling prevents conception, and this is definitely not the case. Lactation has nothing to do with the period of abstinence from sexual intercourse prescribed after child-birth. The child continues to take the breast long after this has been resumed. Basil Thompson says that with Fijian women, in spite of a prolonged period of suckling, 'menstruation often recommences at the 3rd or 4th month after parturition, and cohabitation, even at this early stage, often results in a second pregnancy' (1908, p. 177). So far as I am aware, the flux is not resumed so early in the women of Bougainville—at any rate some of the women I knew well, whose babies were a year or so old, told me that they had not yet begun to menstruate again since the birth. But the strict taboo enforcing abstinence from sexual intercourse for a period I estimate as at least two years after child-birth (see p. 156) ensures that a second pregnancy shall not follow very quickly.

Suckling is continued for four or five years—judging from the size and condition of some children who were still at the breast. But if another pregnancy occurs, the first child is weaned. A woman will never attempt to suckle both a baby and an elder child, as I have seen done by some American Indian women.

Weaning is, in the normal course of affairs, a gradual process, other food, beginning with taro, which is given from birth, being gradually increased in quantity and variety. The child, according to the statements of the women, makes, of its own account, fewer and fewer demands upon its mother, who accedes to them till they cease. There would seem, accordingly, to be no shock to

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

people themselves, is to counteract the influence of those who may be 'making poison' for the destruction of the individual concerned. It follows from this that since persons who are *tsunaun* are more subject to such machinations than commoners, the ritual prescribed for them is always more complex than that employed for the ordinary person.

2. When faced with sickness, either through some cause known to him or through what he regards as 'poison', by which he means what we are accustomed to call 'black magic'.
3. To guard against the vengeance of the *urar* (spirits of the dead), where he may have given them cause to be angry with him.
4. To ensure success in his love-making.
5. To ensure success in his efforts to provide an adequate food supply, either when a fresh start is being made, as in the case of a new garden or the use of new apparatus for the first time, or else when his unaided efforts are proving unsuccessful.
6. To avenge himself upon his enemies, or to do harm to those against whom he has a grudge.

It must be remembered—the point has been stressed by Malinowski—that the additional assistance sought is not regarded by the seeker as a substitute for his own exertions. The exhortations of the women to each other to plant well and deeply were not less vehement because the *urar* had been called upon to provide good taro in place of that which they were planting, nor did the men neglect to fence the garden because ritual precautions had been taken to prevent the pigs from spoiling it. The owner of a new fishing kite must exert himself to the utmost to obtain the ten fish necessary to the ritual belonging to it. The lover does not relax his efforts to find favour in the eyes of the woman he woos by charm and spell. But an exception to this would seem to occur in the case of black magic. The sorcerer does not try to put a spear through his victim; he goes about his lawful occasions while the 'poison' works and the man wastes away to a skeleton and subsequently dies.

I have purposely used the vague term 'various means', because some of the practices included in my analysis may deserve no more important description than 'folk-medicine', while at the other end of the scale comes the ritual involving the *urar*, most if all not of which would be admitted by most anthropologists to be religious, or at least magico-religious, which latter convenient term would probably cover most of the practices and observances to be discussed in the present context. But before discussing the principles

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

underlying these 'various means', I would like to suggest that to the natives who make use of them, the differences between them are looked upon as differences in degree and not as differences in kind. Administering medicine to cure sickness is regarded as an act of precisely the same nature as hanging up the 'medicine' in the rafters of the hut to make the pain stop, and this again is not sharply distinguished from breathing the name of an *urar* over a mixture rubbed on a fish-line to ensure a good catch. The only difference is that procedure involving an appeal to the *urar* is usually undertaken only for reasons of some importance. The same word—*ēto*, which I have translated 'medicine' throughout—is always applied to the substance employed, and here again the difference is one of degree rather than of kind. The leaves to be heated and rubbed on a boil, the complex mixture used in the taro garden in conjunction with an appeal to the *urar*, and substances such as *sisiwa* which possess magical power in themselves, and work independently of spell or spirit, are all alike *ēto*, but some are stronger medicine than others.

At the same time, if the principles underlying various forms of remedy and ritual be analysed, they will be found to admit of classification, and it may perhaps be worth while to consider some of them, provided it is clearly understood that the classification is purely theoretical, and that no hard and fast line would be drawn by the natives between the various categories.

Many medicines for the treatment of sickness are used in much the same way as we should use our own remedies in like case, they are swallowed by or rubbed upon the patient. Whether the plants in the Melanesian's pharmacopoeia actually possess curative properties could probably be determined by analysis, but a great bulk of material is required for this purpose, and the quantity and condition of the specimens I brought home did not permit of it.[1] In some cases, where the plants have been identified, they occur also in reports on the materia medica of other primitive peoples, and in a few instances analyses there given indicate that there may be some scientific justification for their use. Possibly in other remedies the betel-mixture which is their almost invariable accompaniment may, by the astringency of the areca-nut or the pungency of the lime, actually have some beneficial effect apart from the

[1] The treatment of sickness as practised among these natives is discussed in detail in *Folk-lore*, vol. xlvi, June 1935.

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

leaves or roots to which the native pins his faith. More likely still, in other cases, it may be the massage that produces the desired effect, with little reference to what is actually rubbed in or on to the patient, like some of our patent hair restorers. But when all these possibilities have been taken into account, in the majority of cases it seems highly probable that the medicine acts, when it acts at all, solely through the power of suggestion.

What may perhaps be considered as an extension of this idea comes into play when the 'medicine' is rubbed on knife, digging-stick, or fish-line, to ensure that the implement shall do its work with the maximum efficiency.

Examples have been given in an earlier portion of this chapter of the well-known principle described by Sir James Frazer as 'contagious magic', whereby treatment meted out to an object that has been attached to, belonged to, or even come into physical contact with, an individual, reacts on the individual himself, even though the object treated may have been for some time removed from him. This kind of magic seems to be used almost exclusively with evil intent; I have in my records no instance where it was done for the individual's good.

By far the greater part of the magical procedure of these people comes into the other of Frazer's main categories, which he calls homoepathic magic, chiefly in the rather specialized form usually described as 'mimetic magic'. Examples occur in almost every department of native life. As illustrations may be cited, at random, the keeping of the contraceptive root in the rafters, so that 'as it hardens in the smoke, so the woman's belly is fastened so that she cannot conceive'; the avoidance of food boiled in water during the seclusion of a girl at her first menstrual period, lest the flow of blood should be too profuse; the chewing, by the boys wearing the *upi*, of the long tap-root of a certain plant, 'the longer the root chewed, the longer the hair will grow'. All these reasons were given in so many words by the natives themselves, and from their demeanour I gathered that this was what they actually believed, and not a convenient method of putting off the too inquisitive ethnographer. It is noteworthy, incidentally, that the corresponding phraseology ('As this . . . so that') is not embodied in the form of words—where such is present—employed in conjunction with this variety of magic, as is frequently the case in other regions.

Not far removed from mimetic magic are those cases which

3: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1932
ON6 Buka ON6

539 773 Then they lifted up Monohan and came home. They beat the slit-gong. Two young girls heard the slit-gong, they came up, they asked the old woman: "Who is that beating [537] the slit-gong? We know you have no men here." (Beating the slit-gong is the men's prerogative.) The old woman said: "You think I have got a man here, do you?" "Someone is beating the slit-gong at your place." "No, I think it is another place." She had hidden her children. So the two girls went away. The slit-gong sounded again. The two girls came back. "Old woman, you are hiding some man you have got here." The old woman said: "No, all the men ran away." Then the two girls pretended to go away, they hid close by. Then the slit-gong sounded again. The two girls ran back again, and said: "Old woman, we did really hear your slit-gong, you must have a man here." "No, I haven't. I am ill." She had tied a string round her leg to fool them. (When the natives are in pain, they tie a [757] piece of fibre string very tightly round the affected part.) "Can't you see that I am very ill?" One of the girls had a child with her, the child dropped a shell-knife. Now the [445] two brothers were hiding behind a *baran* (large wooden tray on which is pounded the taro for making ceremonial pudding). Their mother tried to catch the shell-knife, she threw over the *baran*. The girls saw the old woman's two children, they cried out: "Oh! the old woman was hiding two fine fellows!" Then one of the girls pulled one of the brothers to her, and the other girl pulled the other brother. So they were married.

Then the two brothers took the two girls and they went and cut up Monohan. Then they cooked him, and put him on the food-platform. Then they killed a lot of pigs, to make a big feast to eat with the man. Then they sent word to the people from every place to come, they had a big feast, a man and some pigs. The old woman sent word to all the men who had run away before: "I called out to you before, and you would not come back, now you must come

Each village has, amongst its older men and women, some with a very fair knowledge of native medicines and also, unfortunately, one or two with a secret knowledge of poisons. The administration of curative and prophylactic medicines is usually accompanied by elaborate rites which the patient must rigidly observe. Contraceptives are commonly used by the women and one herb is claimed to be what might be termed a "contra-contraceptive," *i.e.*, after a woman has been barren for several years, as a result of taking a contraceptive, this herb will make her fertile again. When epidemics occur villages as yet untouched will place small sticks, leaning outwards, on the various roads to ward off the arrival of the spirit of sickness. The sticks are smeared with the spittle of betel-nut, pepper and lime. If the cry of a certain night-bird is heard over a village where a patient lies dangerously ill, it is usual then for any further attempt to combat the illness to cease. Death has spoken. The bird's call is looked upon as the inevitable token of death, and the relations commence to gather together their presents for the dead in readiness for throwing them into the coffin or grave. It is strange, but the cases where to my own knowledge the bird's call has actually preceded the death of a patient have been numerous.

DRUM SIGNALLING ON PORORAN ISLAND

Pororan legend has it that in the days of long ago (*manus*) before drum signalling had been introduced a strange resonant noise was heard coming from the bush by the men of the village one evening. Half fearful investigations were made and it was found that the noise came from a swinging branch beaten by the wind upon a hollow tree. From this sprang the idea of the *tui*, or wooden drum, which is used so extensively throughout Buka, Bougainville and other Melanesian islands.

The making of these drums in the early days, before steel implements were introduced, was a long, tedious and almost sacred performance. In many of the *tui* the aperture at the top is but an inch to an inch and a half in width extending the full length of the drum, while the outer circumference measures in many cases as much as eight feet six inches. Sharpened clam-shells, fastened to spear hafts or long sticks were the only tools used for the work.

5: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930)1935
ON6 Buka ON6

TREATMENT OF THE SICK IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS[1]

114 121 During a residence of twelve months among the Melanesians of the north-western Solomon Islands, I had frequent opportunities of watching the natives treat one another for various forms of illness, and of collecting specimens of the plants and other substances which constitute their materia medica. The purpose of this paper is to place on record information given me by the natives themselves. No attempt will be made to deal with the subject from the standpoint of the medical practitioner, a task for which I am not qualified.

114 126 My information was obtained chiefly from the villages of Kurtatchi and Tabut, on the north coast of Bougainville. It was recorded verbatim in the local dialect, and a sample of each plant was collected at the same time. Unfortunately the incompleteness or imperfect preservation of many specimens rendered their identification impossible. Many of the prescriptions were given by more than one individual independently, or the technique might be the same while the plants differed. For some of the commoner ailments, people seemed to have their own favourite remedies, as do country folk in England. Some of these are secret and were imparted to me in private, others appear to be widely known.

754 757 It is sometimes said that primitive people regard every kind of sickness as the result of black magic. No one could be more conscious, or more terrified, of the power of black magic, which he calls "bad medicine" or "poison," than is the Solomon Islander, and he is not slow to ascribe his misfortunes to the machinations of some ill-disposed person who has "made poison"

[122] [1] This paper is based on data collected between Sept. 1929 and Oct. 1930 on the islands of Buka and Bougainville, the most north-westerly of the Solomon group. I am indebted to the committee for research on problems of sex, National Research Council, Washington, D.C., for the opportunity of studying these primitive people, to the experts at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, for the identification of my botanical specimens, and to Prof. C. G. Seligman for useful comments.

5: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930)1935
ON6 Buka ON6

against him. But, as will be seen, there are certain conditions for which what we might term natural causes are regarded as sufficient explanation. In either case, whatever is done to combat the disease is looked upon as entirely comparable to the procedure employed to ensure success in procuring food or in making love. Any substance—usually, but not always, some portion of a plant—employed in either connexion is known as *ăto*, which, in accordance with what I believe to be the native point of view, I have uniformly translated "medicine." Anyone who knows the appropriate medicine may treat a patient. The "prescriptions" are usually learned from a near relative: father, mother or mother's brother. This knowledge is not necessarily, though it may be, possessed by individuals who are skilled in "making medicine" for other purposes.

Fractures and Sprains

A sprain or a strained muscle is described by the same term as a fracture (*takok* = broken). I met one man (at Petats, an islet off the west coast of Buka) and three women (at Kurtatchi) who were known for their skill in such cases. They treated patients of both sexes, except persons to whom they stood in certain taboo relationships which prohibited physical contact. The following procedure is typical:

Ketar, a young woman, strained her shoulder by carrying too heavy a load of taro. I watched her being treated by Pari, an elderly woman, who subsequently gave me details of the secret mixture she used, asking me not to tell any of the other natives. This mixture (*rŏm*) consisted of the pulped ropts of a plant called *tengnamani* (*Justicia* sp.) mixed with a quantity of *oin* (a red powder, a variety of iron oxide, much used in this region for various magical purposes) and stirred into sea water. Pari has taught the secret to her sister's son, together with the method of using the mixture. At Tabut the root of *wamŏmŏ* (*Erythrina*, the "coral tree") is used in the same manner. When it was ready she took up her lime pot and, putting it close to her mouth, called softly, many times, "Pispoa, Pispoa, Pispoa." Pispoa is the name of the spirit of a man who, when he was alive, was successful with this treatment. Pispoa then came and

5: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930)1935
ON6 Buka ON6

752 stayed inside the lime pot, making the lime powerful. Pari mixed some of this lime with the *rŏm* she had previously prepared. Taking some of this mixture in her hands, she massaged Ketar's side and shoulder, keeping her fingers spread wide apart and applying considerable pressure, with their tips, in a grasping movement, her wrist pressed against the patient's skin. She also manipulated the left breast with both hands. Ketar groaned frequently. Then Pari took a piece of flexible cane painted black on one side, passed it across her palm containing the *rŏm* mixture, smearing the unpainted side, and gave it to Ketar, who tied it tightly round her chest, just below her breasts, smeared side inwards. Then she got up from the verandah on which she had been lying and walked with some difficulty over to her own hut.

A young man came to me one day with a piece of cane tied very tightly round his chest, just below the armpits. He said he had "broken here" (putting his finger just below his left clavicle) while carrying heavy loads from his hut in the old village to the new one. He was being treated by another woman. She massaged him with powdered lime only, calling on several *urar* (spirits of the dead) as she worked. The words used were: "*Sawē*, *Malia*, *Kerep* (names of *urar*), *tar no ma pa* (look at) *takok* (broken (bone, limb, etc.)) *nen wasum ia* (and fasten it)." Massage was continued for several days, during which time he continued to wear the piece of cane tied round his chest. He then said he was all right again.

A dislocated joint (*tapatsik*) is reduced by manipulation.

Skin Diseases

164 That there is a great deal of skin disease among these people is obvious upon the most casual inspection. There was hardly a native in the village of Kurtatchi who was not affected in some form or other. Several varieties are distinguished by native names and are differently treated.

164 Yaws (*Framboesia tropica*, native name *pukpuk*). Every
● 757 child, without exception, suffers from yaws during infancy. It occurs generally during the second year and lasts for several months, during which the child becomes very emaciated, but

5: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930)1935
ON6 Buka ON6

picks up rapidly when the lesions have healed. Its appearance is expected and marks the end of the period of taboo on cohabitation following childbirth. Various methods of treatment are in use. The young leaves of *burustē* (*Eranthemum* sp.) are rubbed over the child's skin; they must afterwards be thrown away. Scrapings from the bark from the trunk of *katsian*, a wild species of areca-palm, are boiled with scraped coconut meat and given to the child to eat. A bundle of leaves of *kort* (*Terminalia catappa*, the Indian almond) is heated in the embers and laid on the sores. [These leaves contain tannin. In India " the juice of young leaves is employed to prepare an ointment for scabies, leprosy and other cutaneous diseases " (Nāḍkarṇi, p. 843).]

I saw no adult with the ordinary form of yaws, but adults frequently suffer from sores on the sole of the foot (*tōkapits*), which correspond to the descriptions given in medical treatises of " crab-yaws," a secondary lesion. They cause great pain on walking. One man would sometimes hobble round the village howling. He used to collect the hard dry mud from the nest of a species of ant, crumble it into half a coconut shell, add some smouldering embers, and blow on it till it smoked. Then he covered it up with the upper half of the coconut shell, in which one of the " eyes " had been pierced, so that the smoke from the smouldering mixture came out of the hole. He held his foot in the smoke as long as he could bear it and said that it gave him considerable relief. Another method of treatment is to soak the flowers of *bubuwiar* (a variety of nettle, *Fleurya interrupta*) in sea water, add powdered lime, and rub this mixture into the sore.

Tropical ringworm (*Tinia imbricata*, native name *ukisas*) is very prevalent. It is not considered a disease, no cause is known for it, and no remedies are used. The natives say that it does not hurt and that they do not take any notice of it, but they pick at the scales a good deal. A healthy person will pick scales from the skin of an infected one, apparently as a way of passing the time. Some people seemed to regard the patterns made by the scaly patches on the skin as an ornament.

Scabies (itch, native name *kuskus*). Nearly every adult carries the lesions characteristic of this disease, some being

5: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930)1935
ON6 Buka ON6

757 almost entirely covered by them. It is disliked and several methods of treating it are practised. The usual method is to [278] boil certain leaves, among them *kokui* (*Eragrostis tenella*) and *rarakot* (*Desmodium adhaerens*), to which must be added some bark and some scraped coconut meat; the resulting mash must be eaten by the patient, who then rubs his hand, greasy from carrying the mixture to his mouth, over the sores.

752 Ulcers and septic sores (generic word *pi*) are very common.
278 The smallest lesion of the skin is almost certain to become in-
[164] fected. They say that the sap of *wirtsun* (the inedible bush banana), if rubbed in at once, will prevent a cut from becoming a sore, but if the cut is deep this is not done, because it is too painful! The most general form of treatment is to chew the leaves or root of certain plants with the betel-mixture (arecanut, lime and betel-pepper, as chewed for pleasure) and spit the resulting mash on to the sore. Among the medicines used in this manner are the root of *takuruts*, a species of Croton (*Codiaeum variegatum*), and the root of *tui* (*Calophyllum* sp.). Sometimes heated leaves, sprinkled with lime, are rubbed over the sore, or their sap is squeezed on to it. The bundle of leaves must then be put up in the rafters. As it dries in the smoke of the fire below, the sore will dry up; if it is thrown away before healing is complete, the sore will break out again. Of several plants thus used, only one is identifiable, *sipsip* (*Pteris ensiformis Burm.*). The bark of the Indian almond (*Terminalia catappa*), stated by Dymock (p. 262) to possess astringent qualities, may be pounded in sea water and squeezed on to the sore. The sap from the leaves of *wuruts*, the native tobacco plant, is sometimes squeezed over a sore to keep the flies away from it.

Boils (*tsub*, *patsuk*) are supposed to be caused by the blood stopping in the skin. They are treated by applying hot leaves, by pressure, and by spitting over the affected area a mash made by chewing portions of various plants with the betel-mixture. [171] Among the plants thus used are *towano* (*Achryanthes aspera*), which is used in Australia (Maiden, p. 150) and in India (Dymock, p. 538) for treating cutaneous diseases, and *mansisian*, a species of betel-pepper. The leaves of betel-pepper are used in India "as a ready dressing for foul ulcers, which seem to im-

5: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930)1935
ON6 Buka ON6

prove under them" (Dymock, p. 600, quoting from Dutt's *Hindu Materia Medica*). 752 278

For burns, the leaves of *rakot* (*Oldenlandia paniculata*) are squeezed between the hands and the juice allowed to drop on to the burnt skin. The burn may also be painted with *oin*, and I have seen sea water poured over it.

Warts (*pisis*) are attributed to the fact that one of the food taboos has been broken. A small boy who was badly affected was said to have brought them on himself by eating sugar-cane, which is taboo to little children. Nothing is done for them. 753

Two prescriptions in my list apply to spear or arrow wounds. The bruised leaves of *wiakun* (*Wedelia biflora*) are heated, and the sap squeezed on to the wound "to make it heal quickly." If the head of the arrow remains embedded, the roots of *pupuna* (*Dryopteris Milneana* or *truncata*) are chewed with the betel-mixture and the saliva spat on to the wound. They say that this makes the arrow-head go further in so that the wound will heal over it, that its presence does no harm, and that healing is painless. 752 273

Affections of the Internal Organs

Next to those dealing with skin diseases, the largest number of prescriptions in my collection concerns various conditions which appear to be disturbances of the digestive system, though the descriptions are often so vague that it is difficult to be sure exactly what is meant. 757●

"If a person has eaten something bad" he is given the scraped root of *wakop* chewed with the betel-mixture. Swallowing this is said to induce vomiting. An emetic prepared in the same manner from the root of *wamut* is given for stomach-ache. Unfortunately, neither of these trees could be identified, but I have included them as evidence that the use of the emetic is known to these natives.

Indigestion is attributed to eating too much or unsuitable food. Certain articles of food are avoided by some individuals for this reason, even, occasionally, their greatest delicacy, pig's fat. A pain "running from side to side" is said to be caused by eating hot taro at the same time as cold taro. Often no treatment is [753]

5: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930)1935
ON6 Buka ON6

757 given and "by and bye the pain goes away." "*Komanē to kamits non*" ("My belly hurts") is a complaint frequently heard. The following methods of treatment are typical of their class:

757 278 "Make a bundle of the leaves of *mansisian* (a wild pepper, not that commonly chewed with areca-nut) and heat it in the fire. Make a little hole in the bottom of the bundle and blow through the bundle on to the place where the pain is. Then chew the root with the betel-mixture, undo the bundle, spit the chewed mass into it, wrap it up again and rub the patient's belly."

"Chew the roots of *karawinoa* (*Eranthemum whartonianum*) with the betel-mixture and spit on to the patient's belly. Put the chewed mass up in the rafters of the hut and leave it there. If you throw it away the pain will come back."

"Rub between your hands the leaves of *tengnamani* (*Justicia* sp.), add lime, and make them into a bundle. Heat this on the fire, but do not leave it there too long. Undo it, and with the leaves in your hands rub the belly, pushing downwards. Then do the leaves up into a bundle again and put it in the smoke in the rafters. As it dries, the pain will be eased."

[164 753] Constipation (*watob*) is very prevalent. No cause is known for it, but it does not seem to be ascribed to "poison." Most of the prescriptions involve the massaging of the patient's abdomen, "to send the faeces down and make them come out." Medicine is also given by the mouth, either as a mash chewed with betel-mixture or as a drink. The following is interesting as showing that these people are acquainted with the principle of the suppository: "Chew the roots of *gartan* (a species of Calamus) with the betel-mixture, spit the mash on to your hand and push some of it up into the patient's bowel. Chew another mouthful, spit it out, and put it into half a coconut shell. Pour some water over it and keep it in the house. If it is thrown away the medicine will not act."

[753 164] Diarrhoea (*tasokokoman*) is also common, and is ascribed to the eating of too much fat or greasy food. The remedies are usually leaves and roots chewed with the betel-mixture and swallowed by the patient. Massage with the chewed root of *wiakun* (*Wedelia biflora*) is also recommended.

5: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930)1935
ON6 Buka ON6

Dysentery (*tasoa*) is regarded as the result of "poison." It is diagnosed by the presence of blood in the faeces. It appears often in a mild form, from which the patient generally recovers. In the early stages it is treated with *wiakun* in the same way as diarrhoea. In severe cases, a drink is given, consisting of the bruised leaves of *riro* (*Morinda citrifolia*) steeped in water mixed with powdered lime. The leaves of this plant are used medicinally in Fiji (Seemann, p. 129). In India a decoction is made of them for the treatment of diarrhoea, and they are also administered as a tonic and febrifuge (Dymock, p. 335).

The passing of blood with the urine is treated in the following manner: "Rub a quantity of the grass *manini* (a sweet-scented grass, *Cymbopogon* sp.) between your hands, mix it with water, then take out the grass and give the water to the patient to drink. Then chew the roots with the betel-mixture and massage the lower part of the patient's abdomen vigorously with the resulting mash in the palm of your hand. The patient must also chew some of the root with the betel-mixture and swallow it."

Fever

There is a good deal of fever, chiefly malaria. It is usually considered to be caused by getting wet and cold, and only very rarely connected with black magic. Both external and internal treatment is given. Typical prescriptions run as follows:

The leaves of *toankenon* (one of the *Rutaceae*) or of several other plants are rubbed between the hands and placed in half a coconut shell filled with water, to which hot stones have been added. The top half of the coconut is replaced, with an "eye" pierced through which the steam will escape. The patient must hold his face in the steam and sniff at it.

When the fever is only just beginning, some freshly picked leaves of any one of various aromatic plants (unidentified) are rubbed in the hands and held to the nose of the patient, who must sniff at them. For later stages of the fever a package must be made of the leaves, heated in the fire, and then unfastened and held to the patient's nose; the leaves, held in the clenched fist, must then be pressed firmly on the patient's head in different places.

5: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930)1935
ON6 Buka ON6

757 [278] For internal use, a decoction is prepared by steeping certain leaves in water, which is then drunk by the patient. Only one of several plants named in this connexion could be identified, *kabku* (*Scleria lithosperma*).

Children's Diseases

They fear very much for their children a sickness called *mēmim*, in which a thick yellow coating appears on the tongue [753] which may choke the child. It is thought to be caused by someone who wishes to injure the child's parents, out of jealousy or other cause, making "bad medicine" to bring about the child's death. For treatment, certain leaves are rubbed between the hands and steeped in water to make a drink. Six different plants were named, none of which could be identified from my pressed specimens.

[753] Another affection peculiar to children is called *bin*. It reduces the child to skin and bone. It is supposed to occur when the child's mother has failed to observe the food taboos appropriate [278] to the period of lactation. To treat it, scrapings of the bark of a mango tree (*bē*) are mixed with lime in a little water and rubbed on the child's abdomen.

[753] Failure on the part of the mother to keep the food taboos may also result in the child getting the sickness *kabets*, which is thus described: "It fastens the child's neck, and then goes into his belly and makes him die." [828] (The word here translated "die" is used of temporary unconsciousness as well as of actual death, it being thought that the person dies and comes back to life again when he recovers consciousness. Wailing begins as if for the dead, to cease abruptly when the patient comes round.) A child whom I saw, said to be suffering from *kabets*, had convulsions. His grandmother massaged his body with a yellow liquid made by soaking in water the bruised leaves of the tree *papets* (unidentified). As she continually dipped her hands covered with powdered lime into the bowl, its contents gradually thickened. She called my attention to this, saying it was the sickness coming out of him.

757 278 When a child's head is hot with fever it is washed with water in which the leaves of *obōb* (Hibiscus) have been soaking.

5: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930)1935
ON6 Buka ON6

A child who is always ailing is thought to be strengthened by being rubbed all over with water containing the leaves of *roabē* (*Desmodium adhaerens*). 757 278

Local Pain

A very general complaint is of "pains in the skin," which seem to be of a rheumatic nature. They are treated by tying a piece of fibre tightly round the place where the pain is greatest, and by rubbing the skin over the site of the pain with a mash made by chewing the leaves, roots or bark of any one of a number of specified trees or plants (all unidentified).

For pain in the back the bark of *winoa* (Canarium almond) is scraped, mixed thoroughly with hot water, and rubbed on the back. The bark of this tree exudes a resinous gum which is stated by Nāḍkarṇi (p. 153) to be stimulant and rubefacient. It may therefore be of use in this connexion as a counter-irritant.

Headaches are frequent, especially a pain between the eyes (*weswios*), which is attributed to the sun burning the eyes. As a rule, the sufferer first binds a piece of fibre tightly round his head. He may then hold his head over the smoke of *gartan* (*Calamus* sp.) leaves mixed with powdered lime, or pour over his head water in which the leaves of *kakariuk* (*Selaginella flabellata*) are soaking, or rub his forehead with a bundle of the leaves of *mansisian* (*Piper* sp.) into which a little lime has been sprinkled. The crushed leaves of another variety of *Selaginella* (*S. imbricata*) are used in India as a local application to the head for the relief of headache (Nāḍkarṇi, p. 237) and the leaves of a species of *Piper* "are applied to the temples in headache for relieving pain" (Dymock, p. 600, quoting from Dutt's *Hindu Materia Medica*). [153] [164]

In some of the prescriptions it is necessary to collect the leaves after treatment and hang them up in the rafters. As they dry, the pain will disappear. When the cure is complete, the leaves are thrown away into the sea. 755

Ear Troubles

The usual treatment for earache is to take the leaves and root of the plant *togoro* (unidentified), rub them to a pulp, and put this into the ear. 757

5: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930)1935
ON6 Buka ON6

752 278 For an insect in the ear the root and stem-sheath of *gartan* (*Calamus* sp.) are chewed with *wiwi*, a small variety of areca-nut, and *tsutsun*, the leaf of a wild pepper. The mixture is made into a bundle, wrapped up in *gartan* leaves and pushed into the ear, and is supposed to make the insect come out. The prescription ends: "Then you must catch it and show it to everybody."

Toothache

● 757 The roots of certain plants (unidentified) are chewed with the betel-mixture and the resulting mash is pressed against the aching tooth. These people seem to suffer a good deal from toothache, and many, even when quite young, lose teeth through disease.

Throat Troubles

757 278 For sore throat, the root of *wanis* (*Paspalum conjugatum*) is chewed with the betel-mixture and the mash given to the patient to swallow, or the leaf of *obŏb* (Hibiscus) may be steeped in water to make a drink. For external use, the leaves of *tengnamani* (*Justicia* sp.) are made into a bundle, heated, and soaked in water. The patient drinks the water and the hot, wet leaves are rubbed on his throat.

If an object, such as a fish-bone, sticks in the throat, it is pushed down by massaging the outside of the throat with a mash made by chewing scrapings from the root of *karawinoa* (*Eranthemum whartonianum*). To ease the soreness, the patient swallows a lump of the already chewed mash.

For a cough, the patient is given a drink made by soaking in water the bruised leaves of any one of a number of different plants. The only identifiable specimen is Hibiscus, the leaves of which are mucilaginous (Maiden, p. 132), so the decoction may actually have a soothing effect.

Swellings

For a swelling behind the ear, take the leaves of *drangi*, hold them in the smoke, then press them hard against the swollen part. This will cause the swelling to go down. To send it to another person, get more leaves of the same plant and throw them in his direction: the swelling will go to him and you will be free from it.

5: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930)1935
ON6 Buka ON6

A swollen leg is rubbed with the chewed root of *towano* (*Achryanthes aspera*). This plant is reported by Maiden (p. 150) to be "administered in India in cases of dropsy." A condition which I take to be dropsy was thus described: "Suppose someone puts a certain bad leaf (the name of which my informant professed not to know) among some bananas and another person eats them, his belly becomes big just like a pregnant woman's and presently he dies." The word for this condition (*wagiug*) also means "pregnant."

Elephantiasis (*pu*) is not infrequent. There is medicine to relieve the pain in the early stages, but my informants did not know it. Afterwards "it is not painful, it only swells up and then we cannot make any medicine for it."

Epilepsy

I heard of one man who was subject to periodical attacks which would seem to be epileptic fits. They were described as follows: "He falls down on the ground, all his skin is tight, then he dies (*i.e.* becomes unconscious), plenty of white water comes up in his mouth. When he comes to life again he spits it out, he stays all right for a long time, then the sickness comes back again." The treatment is to make a mixture of the leaves of *karavetan* (a creeper) with lime and water. The leaves are rubbed over the man's body and he is given the water to drink.

Tuberculosis

The sickness *wapĕ'o*, which I take to be tuberculosis of the lung, is thus described: "The man is nothing but skin and bone, he cannot eat, he does nothing but spit, by and bye he spits blood, then he is all right for a little while, then he is ill again." It is thought to be caused by someone making "bad medicine" with the aid of aromatic plants or leaves which have been worn by the affected individual as ornaments. My informant had heard there was a treatment for it, but he did not know it.

Prevention of Sickness

Epidemics are thought to be caused by *urar* (spirits of the dead) who are angry with the people. Certain precautionary measures may be taken. The medicine used generally consists